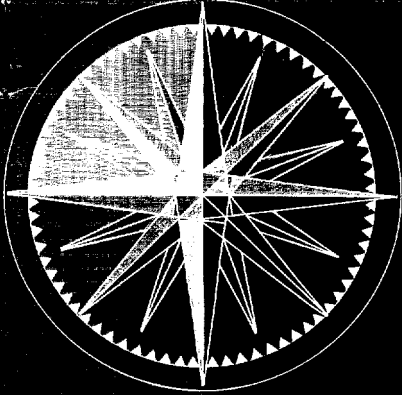


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31 July 1964

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# SPECIAL REPORT

LEFTIST ACTIVITY IN KENYA

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

State Dept. review completed

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## LEFTIST ACTIVITY IN KENYA

Kenya's leftists, including some key cabinet members, have become increasingly aggressive since the country became independent last December. Their activities have increased Kenya's ties with Communist countries, and generated what may be an incipient anti-Western campaign. The prime mover of this activity appears to be Minister of Home Affairs Oginga Odinga, whose personal power, ambition, and freewheeling operations have brought him into increasingly open conflict with Prime Minister Kenyatta's generally moderate policies. Although Kenyatta is aware of most of Odinga's machinations and is increasingly irritated by them, he has so far avoided a showdown. The delicate balance of tribal and political power and the lack of an obvious successor--other than Odinga--point to a continuation of the present uneasy relationship and a consequent growth of leftist influence.

### Odinga's Apparatus

Although a shrewd political opportunist rather than a doctrinaire Communist, the 51-year-old Odinga has nevertheless established his power base largely through his astute dispensing of Communist funds and scholarships supplied by both Moscow and Peiping. It has been estimated that at least 1,000 men in reasonably important positions in the government, civil service, and trade unions owe personal allegiance to Odinga, who has either sent them to study in Communist countries or supplied them with regular financial aid. Several key members of Parliament almost certainly owe their election to financial support from Odinga.

In addition to holding the important home affairs portfolio, Odinga is vice president of the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU) and also the undisputed leader of the Luo tribe, second only in numbers and influence to Kenyatta's Kikuyu, with whom it shares power in a sort of uneasy tribal coalition. Odinga is the only Kenyan leader other than Kenyatta with a national popular following.

Odinga has used these various sources of power, interchangeably or simultaneously, to operate just as he pleases, placing supporters where he wants them, running roughshod through the domains of other ministers, and frequently presenting Kenyatta with accomplished facts which the latter is unwilling or unable to reverse.

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On more than one occasion Odinga has personally selected students to go to Communist countries, bypassing both the minister of education and the KANU selection committee. As minister of home affairs, he was able to remove a Kikuyu civil servant as head of the passport department, and replace him with a loyal Luo. The Kenyan ambassador to the UN and US is an Odinga partisan, as is the minister of information, Achieng Oneko. As vice president of KANU, Odinga organized a KANU "Friendship Delegation" which left Nairobi in June for visits to the USSR, North Korea, and Communist China. Last March, after the Kenyan Government decided not to send an official delegation to the All-African Peoples Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) meeting in Algiers, Odinga sent some of his followers as delegates in the name of a nonexistent "Kenyan Section of the AAPSO." He also selected the Kenyan representative to the 26 July celebration in Havana.

This all-pervasive apparatus, along with Odinga's apparently tireless energy, has created a labyrinth of leftist-oriented activity in many different fields, where all roads seem ultimately to lead to Odinga Odinga.

#### Contacts With Communist Nations

Kenyatta and other Kenyan leaders made clear, even before independence, that they would seek diplomatic relations and

"nonaligned" ties with Communist countries. It consequently comes as no surprise that Communist China, the Soviet Union, and three East European satellites as well as Yugoslavia, now have embassies in Nairobi, and that both Moscow and Peiping have offered economic aid.

Although his post as minister of home affairs would hardly justify such an assignment, Odinga headed the successful Kenyan aid-seeking mission to Moscow and Peiping last April and May. Kenyatta, aware of Odinga's penchant for independent activity, insisted that the moderate Joseph Murumbi, whose title is minister of state in the prime minister's office, accompany Odinga as a sort of watchdog.

Nevertheless Odinga managed to get himself on the May Day dais in Moscow, along with Algeria's Ben Bella. Murumbi later said that during their stay in Peiping, although they were lodged in the same hotel, he would sometimes be unable to locate Odinga for periods of two days. There are indications that Odinga may have made informal agreements with the Soviets that have not yet become generally known in Kenya although he reportedly had no prior consultations with other Kenyan ministers concerned on the substance of the aid pacts.

Minister of Commerce and Industry Kiano, another moderate, told the US ambassador on 14 July that both Peiping and Moscow

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had made "vague" arms offers, but that both had been rejected. However, an 11-man Soviet delegation arrived in Nairobi in early July to commence surveying for technical aid projects. No one knew for sure who had arranged their visas, but there had been no coordination with the responsible office, the External Affairs Branch in the prime minister's office.

The Communist embassies in Nairobi exploited opportunities for contacts with influential Kenyans so rapidly that in March Kenyatta had to order all civil service officers to ask his permission before accepting entertainment from foreign embassies. Kenyatta's action followed a report from his Special Branch that during a one-month period 28 senior civil servants had been entertained by the Chinese Communists alone.

Since independence the flow of students to Communist countries, necessarily engineered clandestinely while Britain ruled the country, has become something of an open migration. Owing largely to Odinga's efforts, fellow-traveling now is an accepted way of Kenyan political life. On 12 June the minister of education answered a parliamentary question by admitting that there were between 1,200 and 1,500 Kenyans then studying

in Communist countries. He added that the exact number was unknown because many students had gone abroad "outside the normal Ministry of Education procedures."

His office indeed has been bypassed. On at least two different occasions Odinga has selected students to go to Bulgaria, and spirited them off on specially arranged flights.

[redacted] in March a chartered Czechoslovak aircraft left Nairobi with 50 Kenyan students, mostly Luos, for an unknown destination. Kenyatta was informed of the aircraft's impending arrival only two hours before it landed, and certain other cabinet ministers were "informally" notified. Odinga was unavailable for comment. The entire matter allegedly was kept out of the Nairobi press on instructions from Minister of Information Oneko. Odinga appears also to have used his position as minister of home affairs to grant passports to his partisans while denying them to other students.

Some Kenyan "students" in Communist countries are receiving paramilitary training. A group of five, selected by Odinga, reportedly returned in June from several months of such training in Bulgaria.

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These trainees are said to have talked openly of "leading the revolution" in Kenya.

#### Information Ministry

The Soviets appear to be making a major effort to gain a grip on Kenyan news media and Oneko's Information Ministry. Almost immediately after independence, the state controlled Kenya News Agency (KNA) began using Soviet-installed radio receivers and teleprinters flown in from the USSR, while Kenyans trained in Czechoslovakia and the USSR arrived to work in the agency. Others have reportedly arrived since, and in June the Czechoslovak News Agency representative in Nairobi was quietly appointed by Oneko as "informal" adviser and editorial and training expert for KNA, although the previous month Oneko had shown some enthusiasm for the suggestion of naming an American adviser. Oneko has recently announced that the Kenya Broadcasting Company will be nationalized, and the Soviets plan to build a powerful radio station in Kenya.

The US Embassy believes that Oneko is determined to thwart all US efforts to break into the Kenyan information media, and that he and some of

his subordinates may have been paid by the Soviets to maintain a clear field for them. Oneko's permanent undersecretary is a Luo considered completely dedicated to the Soviet bloc.

An extreme left-wing Goan journalist P. G. Pinto, long resident in Kenya--and the only Asian detained during the Mau Mau emergency--is a close associate of Odinga and Oneko, and appears to be lurking in the background of KNA, as well as engaging in clandestine political activity on their behalf. The editor of KNA, considered "politically reliable" by Odinga and Oneko, lives in Pinto's house, and Pinto's wife is Oneko's secretary. She has a reputation for losing letters, shifting appointments, and otherwise sabotaging--without his knowledge--Western efforts to get to Oneko.

#### Anti-Western Moves

The Nairobi papers somewhat belatedly raised a hue and cry over the case of the Kenyan students recently arrested following a fight with some New York policemen. The US Embassy believes that instructions to run this story came directly from Oneko and that he was responding to Soviet and Chinese pressure to keep the case alive.

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There are other indications that the Odinga camp may be embarking on a deliberate anti-Western campaign. In a press conference in Nairobi on 10 July, while Kenyatta was out of the country, Odinga publicly blamed "imperialists" in Kenya--and specifically the Western diplomatic corps--for having spread rumors of dissension between him and Kenyatta. Odinga's permanent secretary subsequently retracted this charge, and Odinga admitted to the US ambassador that he had no hard evidence to support his allegations.

Odinga appears to be putting pressure on the government to apply to the Commonwealth and Western embassies the same travel restrictions within Kenya that have been enforced against the Communist diplomats.

Odinga himself is reportedly pressing for the early expulsion of two members of the British High Commission staff.

Odinga's chief targets appear to be British expatriates

in the government, and particularly British police officers. After the cabinet recently agreed to expel the third-ranking police officer, Odinga took it upon himself to issue an order for him to leave within 24 hours. Odinga's purpose was probably to provoke the resignation of Police Commissioner Catling.

Odinga will find or invent reasons for dismissing Catling, and will fire him without consulting Kenyatta.

#### Political Pressure

Odinga is also working to undermine Kenyatta on the political front. He financed the election campaigns of at least six members of Parliament, has reportedly used thugs to reorient the thinking of others, and is wooing several influential members recently disciplined by Kenyatta for their role in the backbenchers' opposition to the government. Odinga is also trying to build up support in organized labor, and appears to have been responsible for a current split in the Kenya Federation of Labor. Most of the leaders of the splinter Kenya Federation of Progressive Trade Unions are politically and financially supported by him and Oneko.

Odinga encouraged and financed the backbenchers in their recent unsuccessful campaign to force the government to set a

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date for forming an East African federation with Uganda and Tanganyika-Zanzibar. Odinga probably sees in this a chance to seize the leadership of a popular issue, and to weaken Kenyatta's image throughout the country as well as his control over KANU. He also realizes that federation, if achieved, would kick Kenyatta upstairs to the federation presidency and give him an opportunity to bid for supreme national power. [redacted]

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#### Kenyatta's Response

Kenyatta and his moderate associates--Murumbi, Finance Minister Gichuru, Minister of Commerce and Industry Kiano, and even Tom Mboya, minister of justice and constitutional affairs and a Luo--are more or less painfully aware of Odinga's operations. Odinga's suspected involvement in the Zanzibar coup, and the ease with which a small band of leftists overthrew the Sultan, opened Kenyatta's eyes to the personal and national danger represented by Odinga and his followers.

Although Odinga's actual involvement in the coup has never been established, he did, as minister of home affairs, hide "Field Marshal" Okello when the latter fled from Zanzi-

bar. He apparently supplied him with money and a car, while professing complete ignorance of his whereabouts. [redacted]

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Before leaving in early July for conferences in London and Cairo, Kenyatta refused Odinga's demand to be designated deputy prime minister, and named Murumbi instead. [redacted]

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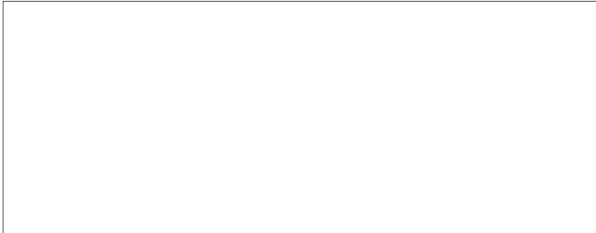
Some members of the government, reportedly shocked by Odinga's furious objections during a cabinet meeting to Kenyatta's decision on the deputy prime minister issue, feel that Kenyatta now will have to force a showdown with Odinga. [redacted]

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Prospects

Many factors, however, seem to militate against any early confrontation. The Chinese, and particularly the Soviets, seem to be operating with considerable caution in Kenya, apparently not wishing to jeopardize what probably appear to them as excellent opportunities for long-term gains. Kenyatta's age--over 65--and the absence of any successor who can command anything approaching Odinga's personal following probably reinforce their idea.

From Kenyatta's side, old ties of friendship and the realities of Kenyan politics make it unlikely that he will attempt to dismiss Odinga or lock him up--moves which probably would push Odinga into an open bid for power. Kenyatta needs the support of the Luos to counter charges that his Kikuyus have taken over the government.

Moreover, the Kenyan Army and police are heavily weighted with Kambas, who in any showdown might be loyal to Paul Ngei, a Kamba member of Parliament who, prior to the elections of May 1963, withdrew from KANU and

formed a short-lived splinter party.

Odinga has also recently been barnstorming among other tribal areas of Kenya, frequently bypassing the regular KANU machinery to make direct contact. On these junkets he has demonstrated his popular support, and lately has begun to expound a political program. Kenyatta probably considers that a move against Odinga would shatter the delicate tribal balance that so far has permitted at least some degree of national unity and progress.

The present uneasy relationship between Kenyatta's relatively moderate group and Odinga and his leftists is therefore likely to continue. Odinga will probably intensify efforts to harass Kenyatta into retiring, or bring him down through constitutional means such as defeat of the government on a substantive measure, or move him up through creation of an East African federation. Meanwhile Odinga will almost certainly continue his bribery, cajolery, and independent machinations with a view of building up his apparatus and following to the point where he would consider himself assured of coming to power when the Old Man disappears from the scene.

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